

# Introduction

## Introduction to Module 6

Life in the military is challenging. When you have a child with special needs it can be even more so. Families in the military have an array of resources available to them, from within and beyond the military community. Help yourself and your family by becoming educated about the support services and resources that are available.

### Military Community Resources

#### *Family Centers*

Family Centers, which are located on military installations, offer a variety of free services and supports designed to assist service members and families with the unique challenges of military life. Services may vary according to the installation's size and mission. Services offered may include the following:

- relocation counseling and lending lockers
- information and referral services
- employment workshops
- volunteer coordination
- parenting classes
- individual and family counseling
- personal financial management
- spouse education and support programs
- deployment support
- family life education and workshops
- exceptional family member support



The Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) offers information about local organizations, support groups, referrals, resource assistance, and non-clinical case management services for families with multiple, complex needs. For more information about the EFMP, refer to [Module 4, \*Families in Transition\*](#). To find your nearest installation EFMP, visit [www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil](http://www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil).

There are resources and referrals available from the Child Development Center to help parents find child care when arrangements cannot be met on the installation.

## ***New Parent Support Program***

The New Parent Support Program (NPSP) assists expectant and new parents who are feeling challenged by the transition into parenthood and may need additional support. Services are matched to the individual family's needs and may include home visits, education, counseling, and referrals to other resources on and off the installation, including special needs organizations. The NPSP is offered at all installations where there are command-sponsored families, but services may vary depending on the location. Many NPSPs offer classes on newborn baby care and positive parenting/behavior management for both moms and dads. Educational materials, such as books and pamphlets, are often available and some programs may also have a lending library of various parenting and family life media. For more information, contact your installation Family Center or military treatment facility (MTF).

## ***Family Advocacy Program***

The military community is not immune to personal or family issues. These concerns can range from minor stressors and challenges related to the unique demands of military life to major difficulties that may place a family at risk for domestic abuse or child abuse and neglect. Services and supports are available to assist with these issues. The Family Advocacy Program (FAP) sponsors activities and services including public awareness briefings, individual and couples counseling, crisis intervention, victim advocacy, support groups, and stress management and other well-being workshops. FAP services may be found at MTF or installation Family Centers.

## ***Child, Youth, and Teen Programs***

Military families face shifting work schedules that are often longer than the typical eight-hour day and must be ready to deploy worldwide at a moment's notice. These challenges, coupled with caring for a child with special needs, can possibly make finding quality child care very difficult. The Department of Defense (DoD) child development system is flexible, yet maintains high standards, and includes the following services:

- Child Development Centers (CDC) provide care for children six weeks to twelve years of age. Some of the Services have inclusion teams to determine the appropriate accommodations and services for your child, and help



When you receive orders to a new duty station, you can request and be assigned a sponsor before you move. Ask your installation Exceptional Family Member Program at your new duty station for a sponsoring family with similar special needs.

ensure that your child's needs can be met in the daycare setting. To locate the nearest CDC, visit MilitaryINSTALLATIONS at [www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil](http://www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil).

- Family child care homes providing services on the installation are certified by the military child development program. These providers deliver critical services to service members on shift work, working extended hours or weekends, and for those who prefer a home-based environment for their children. A family child care home may be the best option for a child with special needs who needs the consistency of a single caregiver.
- Family Centers offer an array of programs that will help your child become involved and make friends. Installations often offer sports leagues and a center where your child can play ping-pong, video games, or other recreational activities.
- Several installations offer special needs camps and activities. For example, Camp Lejeune offers *Camp Special Time* several weekends a year, giving parents some well-deserved time off. Fort Campbell offers *Camp We Can*. Visit your installation Family Center and ask about camps available at your installation or in your community.

### School Liaison

School Liaisons network, educate, and work in partnership with local schools to advise military parents of school-aged children on educational issues and needs. The School Liaison may also assist in solving education-related problems. The goals of the program are to identify barriers to academic success and develop solutions; promote parental involvement in their children's education; develop and coordinate partnerships in education; provide parents with the tools they need to overcome obstacles to education that stem from the military lifestyle; and to promote and educate local communities and schools regarding the needs of military children. To locate your installation School Liaison, visit [www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil](http://www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil).

### Relief Societies

Military communities pride themselves on taking care of their own. Relief societies exist to help families with unexpected problems or financial emergencies. Relief societies provide assistance for the following needs:

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| ■ emergency transportation   | ■ essential vehicle repairs                 |
| ■ funeral expenses           | ■ unforeseen family emergencies             |
| ■ disaster relief assistance | ■ food, rent, and utilities                 |
| ■ child care expenses        | ■ medical/dental bills<br>(patient's share) |

Ask your Child Development Center about summer camps and activities. You may find an array of activities for your children ranging from sports camps to fishing tournaments.

Each Military Service is supported by a private nonprofit charitable organization which provides emergency financial assistance to active and retired service members and their families:

- **Army Emergency Relief Society**  
[www.aerhq.org](http://www.aerhq.org)  
(866) 878-6378
- **Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society**  
[www.nmcrs.org/intfreeloan.html](http://www.nmcrs.org/intfreeloan.html)  
(703) 696-4904
- **Air Force Aid Society**  
[www.afas.org](http://www.afas.org)  
(800) 769-8951

### *Service-sponsored Websites*

Each Service sponsors a website that provides information on military family quality of life programs. These websites also provide news articles, information related to the military lifestyle, and online tutorials:

- **Army OneSource**  
[www.myarmyonesource.com](http://www.myarmyonesource.com)
- **Marine Corps Community Services**  
[www.usmc-mccs.org](http://www.usmc-mccs.org)
- **Fleet and Family Support Program**  
[www.cnic.navy.mil/CNIC\\_HQ\\_Site](http://www.cnic.navy.mil/CNIC_HQ_Site)
- **Air Force Community**  
[www.afcommunity.af.mil](http://www.afcommunity.af.mil)



**Do you need to talk?**  
Military OneSource is available to you twenty-four hours a day.

•  
From the United States  
(800) 342-9647

•  
International Toll Free  
(800) 342-9647

•  
International Collect  
(484) 530-5908

## Additional Military Resources

### *MilitaryHOMEFRONT's Special Needs/ Exceptional Family Member Program Section*

MilitaryHOMEFRONT's Special Needs/EFMP section is the DoD's official website to help service members and their family members who have special needs. This site is packed with information on benefits, allowances, and eligibility, and on military and civilian resources. Visit [www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/tf/efmp/resources](http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/tf/efmp/resources) to find resources to support the following:

- child care
- counseling
- deployment
- education for family members
- legal assistance
- moving and relocation
- new parent support
- personal financial management
- spouse employment
- transition assistance

### *Military OneSource*

Military OneSource provides information, referrals, and assistance to the military community. Accessed by telephone or the Internet, Military OneSource provides special needs consultations, research, resources, and materials intended to enhance current military services available to families with special needs.

A Military Education Specialist is available to assist you with issues related to educating your children. Services are provided on a scheduled appointment basis via telephone and are focused on children with special needs, ages birth to twenty-one. Specialty services can be accessed through the main telephone number for Military OneSource. All services are free of charge. For more information, visit Military OneSource at [www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com).

### *Military Youth on the Move*

Military Youth on the Move reaches out to youth with creative ways to cope with issues that arise in the face of a move, such as transitioning to a new school, saying goodbye to friends, and getting involved in a new community. The website is divided into three primary target audiences: elementary school, middle school, and high school. It also includes information specifically

*"The Military OneSource consultant spoke to me calmly and with a good sense of humor, and helped me find my sense of humor. If it weren't for them, I probably would still be stressing."*

Navy parent of child with behavioral challenges.

parent  
to parent

designed to help parents help their children navigate challenges such as a move, a new school, or making decisions about life after high school. Visit Military Youth on the Move at <http://apps.mhf.dod.mil/myom>.

### **Plan My Move**

Plan My Move is a set of online organizational tools designed to make frequent moves easier and less disruptive for service members and families. Available tools include a customizable calendar, to-do lists, departure and arrival checklists, installation overviews, and installation-specific information on a number of topics, such as education, transportation, child care, and employment. To use this tool visit MilitaryHOMEFRONT at [www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/tf/movingandrelocation](http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/tf/movingandrelocation).

### **MilitaryINSTALLATIONS**

MilitaryINSTALLATIONS is the DoD's official source for installation and state resources available to service members and their families. Here, you can find articles, photos, major unit listings and contacts for programs and services worldwide. Visit MilitaryINSTALLATIONS at [www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil](http://www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil).

### **TRICARE®**

TRICARE offers several programs to assist families with special needs. Extended Health Care Option (ECHO) offers services, equipment, or supplies beyond those available through TRICARE Prime, Extra, or Standard. ECHO Home Health Care (EHHHC) is also available. EHHHC provides homebound family members with intensive home health care services. For more information, go to [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil) or see *Module 3, TRICARE® Health Benefits*.

## **Federal, State, and Community Resources**

### **The American Red Cross**

Today's American Red Cross is keeping pace with the changing military. The American Red Cross sends communications on behalf of family members, who are facing emergencies or other important events, to members of the Military Services serving all over the world. Active duty and community-based military can count on the American Red Cross to provide access to financial assistance, counseling and assistance to veterans, and emergency communications that link them with their families back home. Contact the American Red Cross at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) or (202) 303-4498.

### **Disability.gov**

This website connects people with disabilities to the information and resources needed to pursue their personal and professional ambitions. Individuals with



disabilities can look here for information about travel, work place support, and fair housing.

### ***The National Center on Dispute Resolution in Special Education***

The National Center on Dispute Resolution in Special Education (CADRE) encourages using mediation and other collaborative strategies to resolve disagreements about special education and early intervention programs. The CADRE also offers a spectrum of services including promoting ways to prevent conflict and help with early dispute assistance, education about conflict resolution options, mediation, resolution sessions, and due process hearings. To contact CADRE, visit [www.directionservice.org/cadre](http://www.directionservice.org/cadre), call (541) 686-5060 or (541) 284-4740 (TTY), or fax to (541) 686-5063.

### ***The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance***

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, is a federally funded, state-administered cash benefit program. This program enables low-income families to buy nutritious food with Electronic Benefits Transfer cards. SNAP recipients spend their benefits to buy eligible food in authorized retail food stores, including the commissary.

The SNAP is not available for military families stationed overseas; however, service members and their families can apply for Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance (FSSA). FSSA is a DoD program intended to replace the family's need for SNAP benefits by increasing a service member's Basic Allowance for Subsistence. Although this allowance targets SNAP families, all service members and their families living overseas and stateside may apply.

The FSSA program is based on household income and family size. Nothing in the law prohibits service members from receiving both FSSA and SNAP benefits at the same time; however, SNAP will count any FSSA benefits as income when determining eligibility and allotment amounts. For more information, visit [www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/tf/efmp](http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/tf/efmp).

### ***Medicaid***

Medicaid is a program that pays for health care for some individuals and families with low income and



few resources. Medicaid is a national program with broad guidelines, but each state sets its own eligibility rules and decides what services to provide. This is something to remember when moving from state to state. In most states, children who qualify for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) will also qualify for Medicaid. States can also choose to cover other groups of children under the age of nineteen or those who live in higher income families.

Many states qualify children through programs that allow children with special needs to qualify without considering their parent's income. To find information on Medicaid and Medicaid waivers in your state visit [www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/tf/efmp/benefits](http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/tf/efmp/benefits). Click on "Federal" for information on Medicaid.

### **Medicaid Waivers**

Under Medicaid, the Department of Health and Human Services can waive certain federal statutory and regulatory requirements to allow states to adopt special "waiver" programs, allowing states to offer home and community-based services. These are known as "waiver programs." There are three types of waivers:

- freedom of choice
- home and community-based
- demonstration

Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waivers are those most commonly sought after by military families. These waiver programs enable eligible individuals to live, work, and participate in communities of their choice, avoid institutionalization, and direct some of their services. Although a person with a disability may be eligible, the person may not receive services immediately. In fact, the majority of states have waiting lists because the demand for services exceeds state and federal funding levels. States are not limited in the number of Medicaid waivers services they provide. HCBS waiver programs typically cover a broad range of services, to include the following:

- personal care and assistance — activities of daily living, such as bathing, toileting, maintaining continence, light housework, laundry, transportation, and money management
- health-related services — skilled and unskilled nursing services, such as tube feeding, catheterization, and range of motion exercises



STOMP offers workshops addressing an array of topics. Contact them at [www.stompproject.org](http://www.stompproject.org) or (800) 5-PARENT (V/TTY).



- specialty services — assistive technology, medical equipment and supplies, prevocational services, educational services, and supported employment services
- adaptive services — home modifications including ramps, widening doorways, retrofitting bathrooms and kitchens, and vehicle modifications, such as steering and pedal adaptations
- family and caregiver supports — respite services, training for caregivers, and home health services
- social supports — support which enables the individual with a disability to take part in family and community activities
- case management and service coordination — access to, and coordination of services and supports within and across public and private agencies

If you are receiving Medicaid waiver services, do your research before you relocate to see if there is a waiting list for waiver services and how the services differ from state to state. You can do this by calling Military OneSource and speaking with a Special Needs Specialty Consultant or connecting with other parents or disability organizations in the state you are moving to.

## Medicare

Medicare is a basic health insurance program for Americans over the age of sixty-five and for those with disabilities. Qualification for Medicare is based on the Medicare tax paid through employment; however, a worker's spouse, minor children, and adult children with disabilities may also qualify. To learn more, visit [www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/tf/efmp/benefits](http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/tf/efmp/benefits) then click on "Federal" for information on Medicare.

## The National Center on Education, Disability, and Juvenile Justice

The National Center on Education, Disability, and Juvenile Justice (EDJJ) is concerned by the number of youth with disabilities at risk for contact with the courts or already involved in the juvenile delinquency system. EDJJ provides assistance, conducts research, and disseminates resources in three areas: prevention of school failure and delinquency, education and special education for detained and committed youth, and transition services for youth returning to schools and communities. For more information, visit [www.edjj.org](http://www.edjj.org) or call (301) 405-6462.



The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHY) welcomes communication in English or Spanish.

## ***The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities***

The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY) is funded by the Department of Education and offers a wealth of information in both English and Spanish. The NICHCY serves as a central source of information on the following:

- disabilities in infants, toddlers, children, and youth
- the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which is the law authorizing special education
- the No Child Left Behind Act (as it relates to children with disabilities)
- research-based information on effective educational practices

The center is a valuable resource for all parents of children with special needs and is linked to the BrowseAloud text reader. This means all the information on this site can be read to you. For more information, visit [www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org).

## ***Specialized Training of Military Parents***

The Specialized Training for Military Parents (STOMP) Project is a Parent Training and Information (PTI) Center funded by the Department of Education and dedicated to educating and training military parents of children who have special education or health care needs. STOMP assists military families by providing information, support, and advice.

## ***Supplemental Security Income***

SSI is a federal supplement program that can provide a monthly payment to those with low incomes and few resources who are sixty-five or older, blind, or disabled. Children may qualify. If you think you or your child might qualify, visit the nearest Social Security Administration Office or call (800) 772-1213.

## ***Women, Infants and Children***

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) offers nutritional help to women and children who are low-income and nutritionally at risk. This includes women who are pregnant, postpartum, or breast-feeding and infants and children up to their fifth birthday. WIC provides nutrition education, nutritious foods, and screening and referrals to other health, welfare, and social services.

Service members living overseas may be eligible to participate in the WIC Overseas program. For more information about this program, visit [www.tricare.mil/mybenefit/home/overview/SpecialPrograms/WICOverseas](http://www.tricare.mil/mybenefit/home/overview/SpecialPrograms/WICOverseas).



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